

Application No. 10/594606  
Response to the Office Action dated September 9, 2008

**REMARKS**

Favorable reconsideration of this application is requested in view of the following remarks.

Non-elected claims 1-5, and 13-14 have been canceled without prejudice.

Claim 6 has been amended to include limitations of original claims 7 and 9 and limitations as supported by page 11, lines 6-12 and table 1 at page 13 of the specification. Accordingly, claims 7 and 9 have been canceled without prejudice.

The specification has been objected to because of informalities of section headings. The section headings have been amended as suggested. Accordingly, this objection should be withdrawn.

Claims 6-12 and 15 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kamitani et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,465,108). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Kamitani discloses a method for producing a silica-based film-coated article by using a solution including a silicon alkoxide and acid and occasionally water (see coln. 2, lines 28-42). The reference also discloses that "when the concentration of at least one of either the silicon alkoxide or the hydrolyzate...is over 3 % by weight, the thickness of the resulting silica film exceeds 300 nm, and the resulting film tends to be scratched and is not strong" (see coln. 4, lines 36-45). The reference further discloses that "when the film is heated at 150°C or higher, the silica film neither increases the compactness further, nor improves adhesion of the functional film to be coated on the silica film" (see coln. 6, lines 17-21). In contrast, the process of claim 6 requires that the concentration of the silicon alkoxide be between more than 3 mass% and less than 9 mass% (SiO<sub>2</sub> basis) and that the substrate be heated at temperature higher than 150°C. By heating at higher than 150°C, the silica-based film of claim 6 can cure and thereby enhance mechanical strength

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(see page 10, lines 8-12 of the specification). Moreover, the thickness of the silica-based film of claim 6 exceeds 300 nm but the film does not separate from the substrate after the Taber abrasion test and provides high abrasion-resistant property. The process of Kamitani does not teach the process of claim 6 with which the product having the thickness is over 300 nm can provide high mechanical strength and high abrasion-resistant property even if the product contains over 3 % by weight of the silicon alkoxide and is treated at over 150°C. Thus, the process of claim 6 provides unexpected advantages over the process of Kamitani. Accordingly, claim 6 is distinguished from Kamitani, and this rejection should be withdrawn.

In view of the above, Applicants request reconsideration of the application in the form of a Notice of Allowance.

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